Building Department Newsletter

September 2010

Special points of interest:

- Emergency Escape and Rescue Windows
- Wire Recall Notice
- Residential Clothes Dryer Exhaust
- Correction: Carbon Monoxide Alarms

EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE WIDOWS

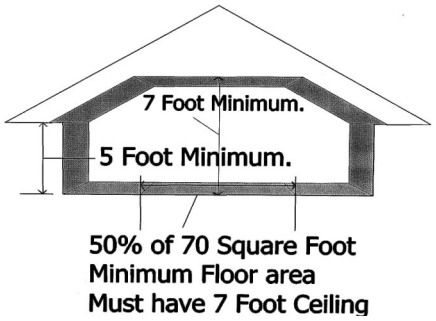
The International Residential Code has previously required emergency escape and rescue windows in every sleeping room and at least one in basements. New to the 2009 Code is a requirement for an emergency escape and rescue window in "Habitable Attic" spaces.

A habitable attic space is defined as a finished or unfinished area, not considered a story and:

- Has an occupiable floor area of at least 70 square feet;
- Has a ceiling height of at least 7 feet over 50% (35 square feet) of the habitable floor area. No part of the required habitable floor area can have a ceiling height of less than 5 feet. In places where the floor area does not have at least a 5 foot ceiling the floor area is not counted as part of the habitable space.

Additionally the "Habitable Attic" must have a roof assembly above, knee walls (if applicable) on the sides and a floor/ceiling assembly below.

The dimensional specifications for an emergency escape and rescue window are unchanged. The bottom of the window cannot be more than 44 inches above the finished floor; have a minimum operable height of 24 inches; a minimum operable width of 20 inches; and the total area of the operable part of the window must be at least 5.7 square feet.

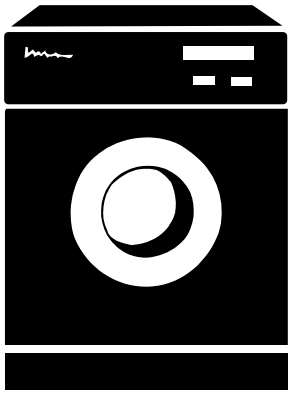


WIRE RECALL NOTICE

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, in cooperation with the firm named below, today announced a voluntary recall of the following consumer product. Consumers should stop using recalled products immediately unless otherwise instructed.

Name of Product: THHN Electrical Wire
Units: About 1,000
Manufacturer: Cerro Wire Inc., of Crothersville, Ind.
Hazard: While the actual electrical wire has "14 gauge" printed on it, the packaging incorrectly labels the electrical wire as 12 gauge. If used as a 12 gauge wire, it can overload, posing a fire hazard to consumers.
Incidents/Injuries: None reported.
Description: This recall involves THNN electrical wire labeled on its packaging as 12 gauge solid white 100' UPC 48243982721 and 12 gauge stranded red 50' UPC 48243229215. The actual wire has "THHN Cerro Wire 14 gauge" printed on it. The UPC number and 12 gauge is found on the plastic wrap and on a label at the bottom of the reel.
Sold at: Home Depot & Menards stores in Wash. from December 2009 through April 2010. The 50-foot wire spools were sold for $9 and the 100-foot spools for about $16.
Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using any switches, outlets or electrical devices using this wire and contact Cerro Wire for instructions on returning the product for a refund. Any contractor or subcontractor who used this wire should inspect their work to see that their work meets local electrical wiring code.

RESIDENTIAL CLOSTHES DRYER EXHAUST



You can now find all the requirements for residential clothes dryer exhaust ducts in one section of the code book. Remember to always use the clothes dryers manufacture's instructions. Below is a synopsis of the requirements of 2009 International Residential Code, Section M1502.

A transition duct is an exposed duct listed and labeled (UL2158A), with a maximum length of 8 feet, used to connect the dryer to the dryer exhaust system. Transition duct shall not be concealed within construction.

Unless using a listed and labeled condensing (ductless) clothes dryer; dryer exhaust must be ducted from the transition duct, independent of any other dwelling exhaust system to convey moisture to the outdoors. A dryer duct must terminate outside the building through an **unscreened** back draft damper located at least 3 feet in any direction from openings into the building.

Dryer exhaust ducts are required to be of metal at least .016 thick, 4-inches in diameter, have a smooth interior metal finish, with the insert end pointing in the direction of flow, supported and secured 4 foot on center. Screws are not allowed to be used to connect duct lengths. Where there is less than 1.25 inches from the finish face of framing to a dryer exhaust duct, a .062 inch steel plate must be provided for protection. This protection must extend at least 2-inches above sole plates and 2-inches below top plates.

When the dryer manufactures instructions are provided to the code official they can be used to determine the size and maximum length of dryer duct. If the dryer manufacture's instructions are not provided, then a prescriptive method must be used. This restricts the maximum length of a dryer exhaust duct from the connection point of the transition duct to the outlet terminal to 25 feet. The prescriptive length is reduced for changes in direction as per IRC Table 1502.4.4.1. For example: a prescriptive 4-inch duct length is reduced 2.5 feet for each 45 degree elbow and 5 feet for each 90 degree elbow. When the dryer exhaust duct is concealed within the building construction the equivalent length of the exhaust duct shall be **identified** on a permanent label or tag located within 6 feet of the exhaust duct connection. Where space for a clothes dryer is provided, then an exhaust duct system shall be installed. If a dryer is not installed at final then the exhaust duct connection is required to be capped and labeled for future use. Makeup air not less than 100 square inches or by other approved means shall be provided when closet enclosures are designed for installation of clothes dryer.

CITY OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED:

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2010, FOR LABOR DAY.

CORRECTION: CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

Last month the article about the requirement for installing Carbon Monoxide Alarms in residential buildings said "alarms need to be installed in all residential structures that have an attached garage or contained fuel fired appliances."

The provision requiring Carbon Monoxide Alarms ended up being changed during the Washington State Building Code Council's final rule making session.

The final rule requires Carbon Monoxide Alarms be placed in all dwelling units regardless of having an attached garage or fuel burning appliances. They still need to be located in a hall or area adjacent to bedrooms.